

IDAHO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

January 15, 2008, Meeting Minutes

Welcome and Introductions

Council Chair Con Paulos called the meeting to order at 9 a.m. He announced that two new members were attending for the first time—Administrator for the Commission on Aging Kim Toryanski and Director of the Department of Correction Brent Reinke. The chair also announced alternates Jeff Church for Tom Luna, Ann Stephens for Mike Rush and George Thomas for Dick Armstrong. He asked members to introduce themselves, noting those who were not in attendance due to scheduling conflicts.

The chair then reviewed the agenda and asked for any changes. He noted that he added two items to the agenda, Karen McGee reporting on Governor Otter's legislative agenda and Bob Fick summarizing the economic outlook presented to the Idaho Legislature. No other changes were made.

The chair identified three items on the consent agenda. The minutes of October 3, 2007, were presented for review and acceptance. Jim Schmidt moved and Betty Kerr seconded the minutes be approved as written. The motion carried unanimously.

The chair also discussed and asked for approval of Transmittal #1, approval of applications for the state's eligible training provider list. John Currin moved and Tom Hally seconded approval of the request. The motion carried unanimously. The chair also pointed out the annual reports (Transmittal #2) submitted by the work force and education agencies.

Chair's Report

Chair Paulos reported his meeting with Governor Otter where the discussion focused on expectations for Idaho graduates. The chair shared his thoughts on a list of personal qualities and suggested that the career cluster concept could be used as a potential organizing structure for communicating the need for high academic standards and work force qualities and skills for all graduates. He also noted that every region of the state had expressed interest in devising strategies to build the pipeline and to grow and sustain the work force. He briefly updated the council on the Region IV WIRED grant and advised them that Regions I and a combined V and VI leadership group were applying for the much smaller Regional Innovation Grants that encourage similar regional activities. Region II has also formed a leadership group and Region III is interested in building a working group to ensure the integration of the new College of Western Idaho into the work force and economic development efforts. Chair Paulos also reported that he had met with the chairs of the Idaho Rural Partnership, the Idaho Travel Council, the Nursing Workforce Center Advisory Council, members of the governor's staff and agency directors earlier in the morning to learn more about Governor Otter's legislative priorities. He asked Karen McGee to offer the report she had given to the earlier group.

Governor Otter's Legislative Priorities

Special Assistant to Governor Otter Karen McGee shared that the governor truly appreciates all of the work of the council, noting that he had the privilege of reforming this council when he served as lieutenant governor. He is very concerned about the needs of business and meets regularly with Chair Paulos to learn of the council's priorities and interests. Ms. McGee said that the governor has a strong agenda focused on outcomes. He wants to see more dollars going to community colleges because they are so important in creating a quality work force. Transportation is also an important issue for the governor. In response to a question from Tom Hally, Ms. McGee said that the physical infrastructure for roads and bridges demand a higher priority than spending on public transportation.

Chair Paulos turned the discussion to the fight against methamphetamine. The members discussed the highly addictive and ready availability of the drug, noting its devastating personal impact on individuals and families. Of the 297 adoptions last year, only four were not meth related. Pat Minegar shared that businesses have an opportunity to sponsor a billboard. The campaign in Montana was very successful in stemming the use of the drug. Ms. McGee introduced Warren Nelson who was just appointed to the Drug and Alcohol Prevention Council. The council asked staff to issue an invitation to Debbie Field to make a presentation to the council at the next meeting.

Nursing Workforce Center Advisory Council (Transmittal #3)

Council Vice Chair B.J. Swanson, and chair of the Nursing Workforce Center Advisory Council, updated the council on the progress of the members. She noted that it was an excellent group with a focus on outcomes. Their goal is to submit recommendations for addressing the shortage in June. She observed that the state needs to change its train of thought to make sure that it can meet the needs for training and the work force. Dr. Tingey added that ISU turns away 60 percent of its applicants. Ms. Swanson responded that the council members are looking at the supply of nurse educators and researching alternate offerings. Chair Paulos offered that he had an opportunity to sit in on one of the meetings and was very impressed by the discussions. He thanked Ms. Swanson for her work on the effort.

Carl Perkins Act (Transmittal #4)

Associate Administrator of the Division of Professional-Technical Education Ann Stephens presented the "Executive Summary of the Idaho State Five-Year Plan, Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, July 1, 2008—June 30, 2013." She noted this plan was developed in consultation with the Office of Governor Otter, State Board of Education, Division of Professional-Technical Education, Department of Labor and the Workforce Development Council. The division also consulted with a wide range of other groups including the six technical colleges, public schools, teachers, students, businesses and labor and others who have an interest in professional-technical education.

Idaho's five-year plan incorporates changes within the new Carl Perkins Act (Perkins IV) with some state level decisions to improve the professional-technical education system. Perkins IV brings an emphasis on integrating technical education with academic skills; training for high-wage, high-skill or high-demand occupations; increased accountability at both the state and local level by using some of the performance measures of the No Child Left Behind program and establishing mechanisms for sanctioning poor performance. The state will use some of the funds to establish six Advanced Learning Partnerships that will strengthen the linkages between the Tech-Prep program and the professional-technical education system. Four hundred twenty thousand dollars in Perkins funds will be used to support this new initiative with the remainder of the resources being split into 65 percent for secondary schools and 35 percent to the postsecondary institutions.

Ms. Stephens also noted that the division's budget request for FY2008 is \$60,125,700 with 12 percent coming from federal sources and 85.5 percent from the General Fund.

Tom Hally moved and John Currin seconded a motion to have the Council Chair transmit a letter to the Governor expressing the council's support and approval of the Five-Year Plan. The motion passed unanimously.

Apprenticeship Program

An overview of the Registered Apprenticeship Program in Idaho was presented by State Director, Office of Apprenticeship, U.S. Department of Labor Bill Kober. He said apprenticeship is a proven way for people to thoroughly learn high skills in a variety of occupations. It is a combination of on-the-job training coupled with classroom-style training. A registered program is coordinated by his office, and this ensures the training is delivered, skill competencies are learned and tested and other rules are followed. It is an industry/employer driven program, and most of the money to cover the costs comes from the employer. There are 900 occupations for which an apprenticeship training plan has been established. There are 220 apprenticeship agreements in place in Idaho right now.

Mr. Kober said the apprenticeship system is not what it was a few years ago—confined to crafts and trade occupations, generally occurring via union-management agreements and rather localized. Now there are many more apprenticeship occupations, the related training can be in a distance-learning mode, and the industry cluster approach is being used. He also stated his mission is to expand apprenticeship opportunities throughout the state by stressing the flexibility and cost-benefit aspects of the program. As an example of this, he introduced Vicki Isakson.

Assistant Manager of the Idaho Department of Labor's Coeur d'Alene office Vicki Isakson described a new apprenticeship program in northern Idaho. The program, slated to start January 15, 2008, is designed to serve 15 youth in apprenticeship positions with six local employers. This School-to-Registered-Apprenticeship Program has received excellent assistance and some funds from North Idaho College and the Division of

Professional-Technical Education. The emphasis is on training for jobs in advanced manufacturing, geo-spatial and health care industries.

John Currin asked if the apprenticeship programs coordinated with the vocational education system and if they were recognized nationally. Ann Stephens replied the professional-technical schools provide much of the related training required in apprenticeship programs. Bill Kober explained national recognition of the apprenticeship credentials is the reason for the registered system. Jan Nielsen asked Mr. Kober if the apprenticeship requires any pre-testing of the trainee. Pre-testing or any kind of pre-program qualification is up to the employer, Mr. Kober responded. Ms. Nielsen also asked if the programs were connected with the One-Stop System. Mr. Kober said yes, but the level of engagement varies around the state. Brent Reinke asked if the apprenticeship program had any ties with the correction facilities in northern Idaho. Mr. Kober said not at this time but he welcomes the opportunity to discuss this with them.

Investments in Manufacturing (Transmittal #5)

The chair asked Idaho Department of Labor Business Liaison Leandra Burns to briefly describe Transmittal #5. Ms. Burns explained that some of the WIA Governor's Set-Aside funds – \$50,000 per region – have been used to stimulate new ways in which the Idaho manufacturing industries can recruit and retain a quality work force.

Ms. Nielsen asked if it is realistic to expect the Region II employers and other interests to develop a strategy and actually use the setaside. Ms. Burns replied that progress has been made to date and she thinks the likelihood of a successful program is good. Dave Whaley moved that the commitment of \$50,000 of the Governor's Set-Aside funds for the development of a manufacturing work force strategy in Region II to be used in PY2007. John Currin seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

NGA Policy Academy (Transmittal #6)

Idaho Commission on Aging Older Worker Coordinator Melinda Adams informed the council that Idaho was invited by the National Governor's Association to apply for a Policy Academy on developing state strategies to increase the proportion of seniors who are employed and who volunteer.

The Policy Academy combines extensive technical assistance by national experts with work done by a group of state policymakers to develop state specific responses to a national issue. Because the work force is aging and senior citizens are maintaining active lifestyles longer than in the past, these dynamics have become a national issue. Effective state responses will work to benefit both aspects of the issue.

A draft proposal was developed for possible submission in May of 2007. However, it was not submitted for various reasons, but now seems to be an opportune time for its submittal. Ms. Adams reviewed the highlights of that proposal and then asked for the council's support of the application. Tom Hally expressed support but noted that the real

problem with seniors working is how earnings decrease Social Security and other retirement benefits.

The chair asked for a motion to have the council send a letter of support to the Governor and attached to the application to NGA. Dave Whaley so moved, and Kim Toryanski seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

WIA Youth Service Design (Transmittal #7)

Idaho Department of Labor Senior Planner Kay Vaughan presented Transmittal #7. This transmittal presents the requirement the state council undertake a process to review current youth program policies and make recommendations for changes and future programmatic priorities. Ms. Vaughan presented the recommendation that the council appoint a working group that would include a representative from each region as well as some from youth-serving agencies.

Chair Paulos asked for volunteers, and a few indicated they might be interested. He suggested staff members develop a draft meeting and issue agenda/schedules so the membership can better know what is being asked of them if they are asked to participate.

Hiring the Ex-Offender Promotion

Department of Correction Educational Program Director Gail Cushman asked for an opportunity to provide some follow-up to her presentation at the last council meeting. She handed out a brochure that presents the reasons for hiring an ex-offender. It will have statewide distribution. Brent Reinke added his comment that the growth in the number of offenders has been overwhelming and the correctional system needs community and employer support if this trend can ever be reversed.

2007 Idaho Fringe Benefit Survey

Idaho Department of Labor Senior Research Analyst Teresa Hammer made a presentation on results from the department's 2007 Fringe Benefit Survey.

Fringe benefits such as leave, retirement and insurance have become increasingly important to employees and employers alike. Not only do benefits account for a significant portion of overall compensation, but the competitiveness of an employer's fringe benefits package can be a significant factor in attracting and maintaining quality employees. That is why it is important to determine the types of benefits offered as well as which employers offer them.

The Idaho Department of Labor's new Fringe Benefits Survey results show that financial pressures on Idaho employers have taken a toll on benefits offered in the past two years, resulting in an overall reduction in medical, dental, leave and retirement benefits offered between 2005 and 2007.

The 2007 Fringe Benefits Survey evaluates the types of benefits Idaho employers made available to their workers as well as the frequency of benefits offered. Specifically, this survey provides statewide estimates on the number of full-time and part-time employees offered and receiving benefits as well as the size and industrial classification of employers providing the benefits. This year's survey was modeled to follow the format of benefits surveys used by Washington and Oregon, making results comparable between the three northwestern states.

Surveys were mailed to approximately 1,500 randomly selected employers throughout Idaho—a response rate of 76 percent was obtained. Benefits examined include health and dental insurance coverage; paid leave including vacation, sick time, undesignated leave and holidays and retirement plans. General findings are significant at a 95 percent confidence level with a margin of error of plus or minus 2 percentage points. Results with fewer than three respondents were suppressed to protect confidentiality.

The responses showed a large proportion of employers offered benefits to full-time employees; fewer offered these same benefits to part-time employees. Large employers were more likely to offer benefits to their employees and their families, and government employers were far more likely to offer employee benefits than their private sector counterparts in nearly every category.

Across industries, the level of benefits appears to be linked to the level of skill required for that industry. Service sector and agriculture industries offered fewer benefits than ones which typically require more experience and education.

Idaho Career Clusters

Division of Professional-Technical Education Curriculum Coordinator Sally Harris and Career Guidance Coordinator Kristi Enger presented the council with an overview of Idaho's Career Clusters. Career clusters are groups of occupations and industries with shared business function and represent occupations from entry through management level including technical and professional careers. Nationally there are 16 career clusters. Idaho has adopted this concept and created six super clusters including Arts and Communication, Health Care, Agriculture and Natural Resources, Business and Management, Human Resources and Engineering and Industrial Systems.

Career clusters are implemented through a program of study which identifies a series of courses organized around the career clusters for academic, elective and professional-technical offerings. The benefits of career clusters for students and parents include academic achievement and connection to school, college, workplace and life-long learning. There are multiple pathways to assist students in preparing for postsecondary education with less remediation.

Idaho Career Information System

Career Information System Director Christie Stoll provided the council with information about the CIS program, currently administered within the Idaho Department of Labor. The Career Information System helps residents make positive educational and career decisions by providing comprehensive career information and resources. It provides detailed Idaho information and planning tools so individuals can make informed decisions about their future, focusing on career potential. A majority of the state's school districts, 93 percent, and 100 percent of Idaho Department of Labor, Vocational Rehabilitation and correctional entities use CIS. Idaho's youth are a major program focus. CIS provides pertinent information to help students make informed career decisions, integral to improved educational achievement, attainment and efficiency. These youth are more likely to graduate from high school and achieve success beyond that level. New research indicates that between ages 9 and 13 children are able to identify how much they are willing to apply themselves towards finding a career. As a result, a new CIS Jr. program was developed, targeting middle school youth and providing information they need to begin thinking about their future. Access to the program is available through subscription.

Idaho Connections

Idaho Department of Labor Assistant Deputy Director Jay Engstrom conducted a presentation on Idaho Connections, an idea based on a "Web portal" – jobs.Idaho.gov – designed to coordinate the state's current work force development programs and resources and market Idaho as a place for building careers and jobs. The strategies designed to market this project include highlighting careers and jobs offered by Idaho businesses and promoting Idaho's Career Information System, career consultants available in each of the department's local offices and Idaho's training and apprenticeship programs. Once implemented, the portal would market Idaho as a great place to build a career, profile Idaho companies and their jobs and bring together resources and information about Idaho's businesses and its work force climate, the state Department of Labor, Division of Human Resources, Career Information System, its many colleges and universities, training programs and apprenticeship opportunities.

It is anticipated that these efforts will lead to increased job listings with targeted employer profiles and exposure to more job seekers, brought about by the interest created by the profiles and career potential with employers as well as the interest in training opportunities. The portal's benefits would be evaluated by noting the increase of registered workers, the expanded pool of business listings, additional traffic on CIS, the increased usage of the department's training programs and the number of Web portal visits.

Council members indicated that connectivity was a concern as there are still parts of the state that do not have Internet access. Mr. Engstrom responded that with statewide coverage, residents would be fully connected to the Internet through the department's 24 accessible local offices.

Economic Outlook

Idaho Department of Labor Communications and Legislative Affairs Manager Bob Fick addressed the council on the state's economy. Department analysts indicate that the state will feel the impact of the national recession and Idaho's economy is likely to slow somewhat during the current quarter. The fourth quarter (Oct-Dec) showed a decline in the state's employer payroll. From 2005 to 2007, the state showed a 4.2 percent growth in jobs, with 19 percent of its jobs associated with manufacturing during the last year compared to the 1990s when 21 percent of the jobs were manufacturing-related. Residential construction was approximately \$1 billion lower in 2007 than in 2006, while commercial construction had not picked up enough to make up for the difference. The service industry, however, will maintain its efforts to sustain part of the economy.

Strategy Development for the Workforce Development Council (Transmittal #8)

This agenda item was tabled until the next council meeting.

New Business and Next Meeting Date

Chair Paulos called for suggestions from council members for the next meeting date, with May 21 preferred by the majority. Cheryl Brush asked that agenda topics be provided to her before the next meeting.

After a brief discussion on the council's committee membership, Chair Paulos adjourned the meeting at 4:15 p.m.

Workforce Development Council

Members:

George Thomas for Dick Armstrong
Sue Arnold (absent)
Kara Besst
John Currin
Jim Ellick (absent)
Millie Flandro (absent)
Tom Hally
Cindy Hedge
Betty Kerr
Alex LaBeau
Jeff Church for Tom Luna
Roger Madsen
Shirley McFaddan
Patrick Minegar
Jan Nielsen
Kirby Ortiz
Con Paulos
Brent Reinke
Ann Stephens for Mike Rush
Doug Sayer
Jim Schmidt
Donald Smith
B.J. Swanson
Dene Thomas
Kent Tingey
Kim Toryanski
Dave Whaley
David Yoder

Guests:

Jim Adams
Melinda Adams
Susan Baca
Rico Barrera
Cheryl Brush
Leandra Burns

Terry Butikofer
Dan Cadwell
John Cantrell
Barbara Case
Susan Choate
Gail Cushman
Cheryl Engel
Kristi Enger
Jay Engstrom
Bob Fick
Sara Gieseke
Sam Greer
Teresa Hammer
Nanna Hanchett
Sally Harris
Vicki Isakson
Dwight Johnson
Scott Johnson
Susan Johnson
Bill Kober
Dale Langford
Mike Lyons
Sue Madarieta
Kent Mallory
Jim Marconi
John McAllister
Allison McClintick
Karen McGee
Nancy Ness
Ron Nilson
Kim Osadchuk
Arthur Page
Raquel Reyes
Jerry Riley
Kristyn Roan
SeAnne Safail
Alice Taylor
Rogelio (Roy) Valdez
Genie Sue Weppner